

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia: Mr. Speaker, they have done it again! I rise today to once again congratulate the Boys Basketball Team of I.C. Norcom High School in Portsmouth, Virginia, on winning the Virginia High School League Group AAA State Basketball Championship.

On Friday March 11, before a sellout crowd at Virginia Commonwealth University's Siegel Center, the Greyhounds of I.C. Norcom beat L.C. Bird of Chesterfield 54-45 to win their second consecutive State Basketball Championship. They are the first consecutive year champions since 2004, and have brought the second State Basketball Championship to the city of Portsmouth.

Not content to rest on the accomplishments of last year, Coach Leon Goolsby pushed the Greyhounds to even greater heights this year. The team's 30-1 record this year, the best in school history, improved on last year's 25-4 record. This year's team was able to win four titles (Eastern District Regular Season Champions, Eastern District Tournament Champions, Eastern Region Champions, and State Champions) while last year's team only captured three of these four. Under the tutelage of Coach Goolsby, the Greyhounds have grown and matured into being one of the top three Boys' Basketball teams in the Nation in multiple national polls.

Perhaps more impressive than the number of I.C. Norcom's wins is the way in which they won their games. The Greyhounds have consistently rallied from behind beating opponents who thought they had their games won. I can say from first-hand experience that this persevering ethic makes their games even more exciting to watch. I had the opportunity to see I.C. Norcom play in both the State Tournament Semi-final game against Highland Springs, and the Championship against L.C. Bird, and in both games, the team trailed at the half. But like clockwork, the Greyhounds, with a smothering defense and deft offense came back in the second half of both games to win by a comfortable margin.

These consecutive state championships will be the newest milestones in the long and storied history of I.C. Norcom High School. It was founded in 1913 as the High Street School, the first public high school for black students in Portsmouth. I.C. Norcom was renamed in 1953 in honor of its first supervising principal Israel Charles Norcom, a pioneering educator, civic leader and businessman. Now, more than fifty years and three locations later, I.C. Norcom High School is still an innovating and inspiring place for Portsmouth students.

I.C. Norcom is doing a great job cultivating excellence both on and off the athletic field. In addition to excelling on the basketball court, the Greyhounds are also doing great things in the classroom. I.C. Norcom houses a Center of Excellence in Math and Science, which provides students with additional classes in science, math, and technology.

Once again, I would like to extend my congratulations to the I.C. Norcom players and their families, Principal Lynn Briley, Coach Leon Goolsby and the rest of his coaching staff. On behalf of the people of the Third Congressional District of Virginia, I.C. Norcom alumni, and the entire

City of Portsmouth, I say job well done on a second consecutive championship, and I wish the program years of success in the future.